

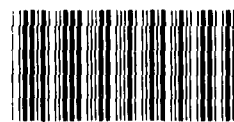
GAO

United States General Accounting Office 133127
Fact Sheet for the Honorable
Ron Marlenee, House of Representatives

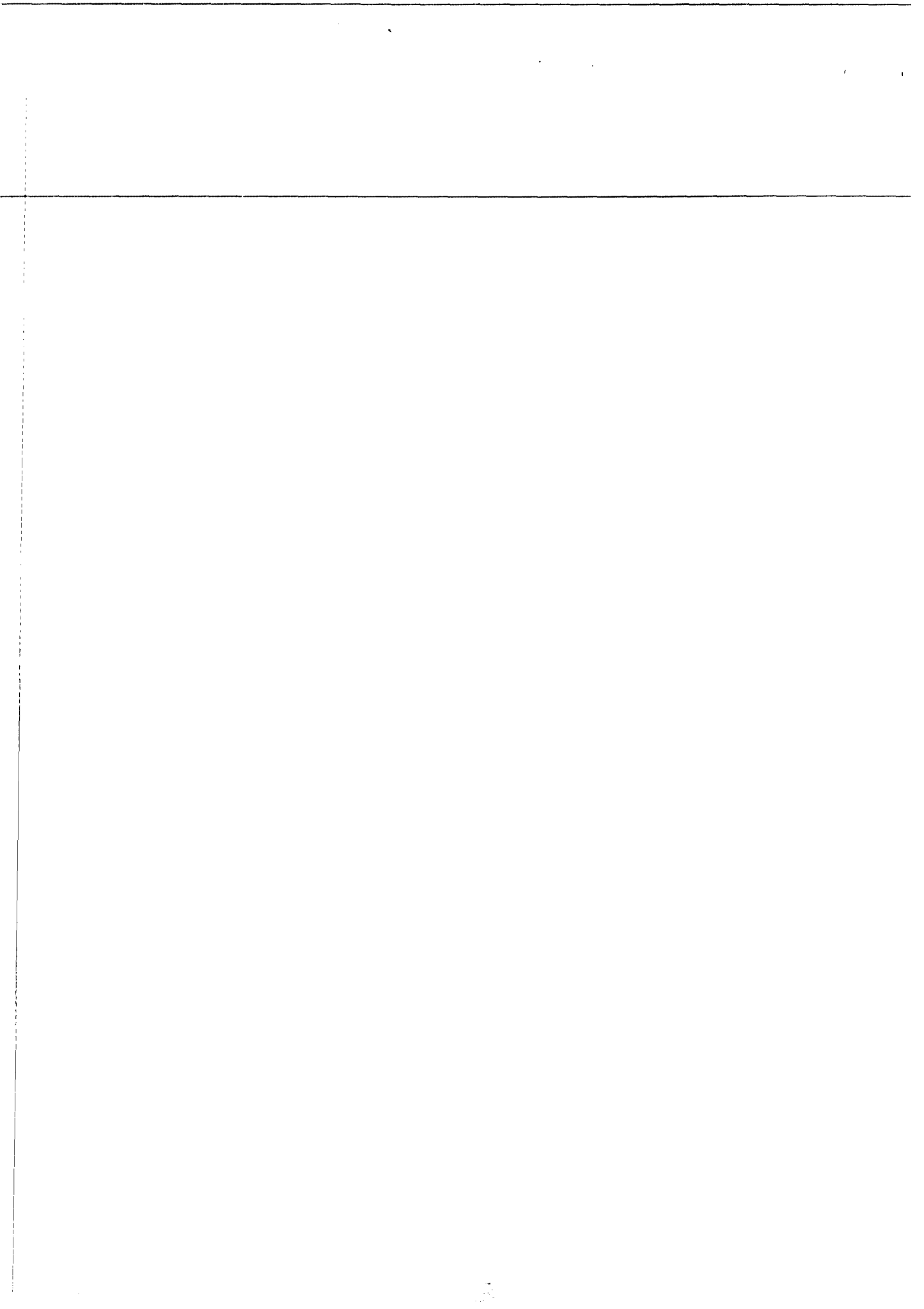
June 1987

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Data on Program Eligibility and Expenditures



133127





United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Resources, Community, and
Economic Development Division

B-226657

June 5, 1987

The Honorable Ron Marlenee
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Marlenee:

In your February 18, 1987, letter, and in subsequent discussions with your office, you asked us to address three questions in order to establish baseline data to monitor and evaluate proposed legislation concerning Indian affairs. Specifically, you asked what is

- the number of Indians eligible for federal programs and assistance in 1960, 1970, 1980, and estimated for 1990;
- the number of Indians eligible by blood quantum for federal programs and assistance; and
- the total federal expenditures for Indian programs for fiscal years 1986 and 1987?

While you asked only for information on assistance to Indians located in the contiguous 48 states, the information provided to us, and included in this report, represents figures for the entire United States, because figures for Indian population and Indian program funding are not kept separately for just the contiguous 48 states.

In summary, we found that the Indian population has increased from 523,591 in 1960 to 1,364,033 in 1980, or 161 percent, according to Bureau of the Census figures.¹ The Indian population has also increased in relative proportion to the general population, from 0.3 percent in 1960 to 0.6 percent in 1980, or 100 percent. It should be recognized that according to a Bureau of the Census official, the figures provided represent the total potential Indian service population and not Indians who actually qualify for federal program services and benefits. Furthermore, all Indians do not automatically qualify for federal Indian programs. They must meet the

¹For purposes of the Bureau of the Census, anyone who declares himself or herself to be an Indian is considered an Indian.

eligibility requirements for each program. As agreed, we relied on Bureau of the Census data to obtain Indian population figures. Because, according to a Bureau of the Census official, the Bureau does not project population figures, we were unable to obtain information on the Indian population in 1990.

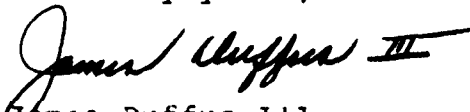
According to Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Services officials, federal Indian programs' eligibility criteria does not include blood quantum requirements. Instead, federal Indian programs are generally provided to federally recognized tribes or their members. Many federally recognized tribes, however, have established Indian blood quantum requirements for tribal membership. In addition, Indians may need to reside on or near a reservation in order to qualify for federal program benefits. We also found that the federal budget authority for Indian programs in fiscal year 1986 was about \$3.0 billion and the same amount is estimated for fiscal year 1987, according to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). These figures include amounts set aside exclusively for Indians on programs for which non-Indians are also eligible. Furthermore, the figures include amounts for all Native Americans, including Alaskan Natives and Hawaiian Natives.

Sections 1 through 3 of this fact sheet provide our responses to your concerns. We relied on a combination of information obtained from the Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census (Census Bureau), the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Department of Health and Human Services' Indian Health Service, and OMB headquarters offices in Washington, D.C., and from the August 1985 report entitled Federal Programs of Assistance to American Indians, prepared for the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs by the Congressional Research Service to respond to your questions.

Copies of this fact sheet are being sent to the Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, the Department of Health and Human Services' Director of Indian Health Services, and the Director, OMB. We will also make copies available to others on request. Should you need further information, please contact me on (202) 275-7756.

Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix I.

Sincerely yours,


James Duffus III
Associate Director

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ABBREVIATIONS

BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior
GAO	General Accounting Office
IHS	Indian Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services
OMB	Office of Management and Budget

SECTION 1
DATA ON INDIANS ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL
PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE

What is the number of Indians eligible for federal programs and assistance in 1960, 1970, 1980, and estimated for 1990?

GAO Response

The following Census Bureau figures show the total Indian population for the requested years.

Table 1.1: Total Indian Population for Selected Years

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Indian population</u>	<u>Percent of general population</u>
1990	a	-
1980	1,364,033	0.6
1970	792,730	0.4
1960	523,591	0.3

^aThe Census Bureau does not estimate future population growth.

Determining the specific number of Indians who are eligible for federal programs and assistance out of the total Indian population can only be determined on an individual case-by-case basis.

The Congress extended U.S. citizenship in 1924 to all Indians born in the territorial limits of the United States. Indians, therefore, have at least the same rights and privileges as all citizens. For example, Indians are eligible for assistance under the Social Security Act, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Supplemental Security Income benefits, on the same basis as non-Indians.

In addition, other federal programs and assistance administered by agencies such as the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Interior, and Health and Human Services are specifically designed to benefit Indians.¹ However, there is no automatic payment to a

¹According to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), there were 12 federal departments or agencies that provided benefits and services to Indians during fiscal year 1986. According to OMB, there were about 800,000 Indians in the service population during fiscal year 1986 (based on Bureau of Indian Affairs estimate of Indians residing on or near reservations).

person because he or she is an Indian; to be designated as eligible for these services and benefits, an Indian must meet the eligibility criteria established under each federal program. For example, to receive Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) assistance, an individual must be a member of an Indian tribe recognized by the federal government. Most BIA services and programs are also limited to eligible Indians who reside on or near a reservation.

SECTION 2
DATA ON INDIANS ELIGIBLE
BY BLOOD QUANTUM

**What is the number of Indians eligible
by blood quantum for federal programs
and assistance broken down by number of**

**--Full-blooded
--1/2-blooded or more
--1/4-blooded or more
--less than 1/4-blooded?**

GAO Response

Federal Indian programs' eligibility criteria does not include blood quantum requirements, according to BIA and Indian Health Service (IHS) officials. Federal Indian program services and benefits are generally provided to federally recognized tribes or their members. There are about 300 federally recognized tribes in the contiguous 48 states. Tribal groups have varying requirements for determining tribal membership. Many of these tribes have established minimum Indian blood quantum requirements for membership. A summary of the number of Indian tribes identified as having established minimum blood quantum requirements is provided in table 2.1. The information was developed in October 1985 by IHS. The summary is based upon the best available information.

Table 2.1: Number of Identified Federally Recognized
Indian Tribes With Blood Quantum Requirements
(October 1985)

<u>Blood quantum requirement</u>	<u>Number of Indian tribes</u>
One-half blood	18
Three-eighths blood	1
One-fourth blood	115
One-eighth blood	22
One-sixteenth blood	<u>7</u>
Total	<u>163</u>

Source: Indian Health Service, U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services.

SECTION 3
FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FOR INDIAN
PROGRAMS, FISCAL YEARS 1986-87

**What is the total federal expenditures combining
all executive departments for Indian programs
for fiscal years 1986 and 1987?**

GAO Response

The Office of Management and Budget which tracks budget authority and actual expenditures for governmentwide Indian programs and services, provided the fiscal years 1986 and 1987 costs presented in table 3.1. These figures include amounts for programs which are exclusively for Indians, as well as amounts set aside for Indians on programs for which non-Indians are also eligible. Furthermore, the figures include amounts for all Native Americans, including Alaskan Natives and Hawaiian Natives.

We were cautioned by OMB officials that this data was acquired verbally, was not verified, and is the best available information based on the individual responses of the listed departments and agencies.

Table 3.1: Total Indian Funding Governmentwide (Thousands)

Departments/ Agencies	Fiscal year 1986		Fiscal year 1987	
	Actual		Requested budget	Enacted as of March 1987
	Budget authority	Outlays ^a	Budget authority	Budget authority
Agriculture	\$ 91,552	\$ 93,957	\$ 93,699	\$ 95,699
Commerce	4,570	4,570	1,295	4,295
Education	342,393	417,889	345,229	360,028
Energy	183	183	200	200
Health and Human Services	959,626	960,928	994,636	1,025,397
Housing and Urban Development	402,386	440,300	270,609	281,609
Interior	1,084,551	1,065,095	1,061,306	1,088,394
Labor	71,133	73,991	73,305	75,124
Transportation	95,700	101,000	75,000	0
Treasury	9,891	12,087	0	0
Environmental Protection Agency	330	2,229	927	927
Small Business Administration	<u>1,500</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,500</u>
Total	<u>\$3,063,815</u>	<u>\$3,172,979</u>	<u>\$2,917,706</u>	<u>\$2,933,173</u>

^aIn some cases outlays also include prior year funding authority.

Source: OMB.

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